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17 November 1965



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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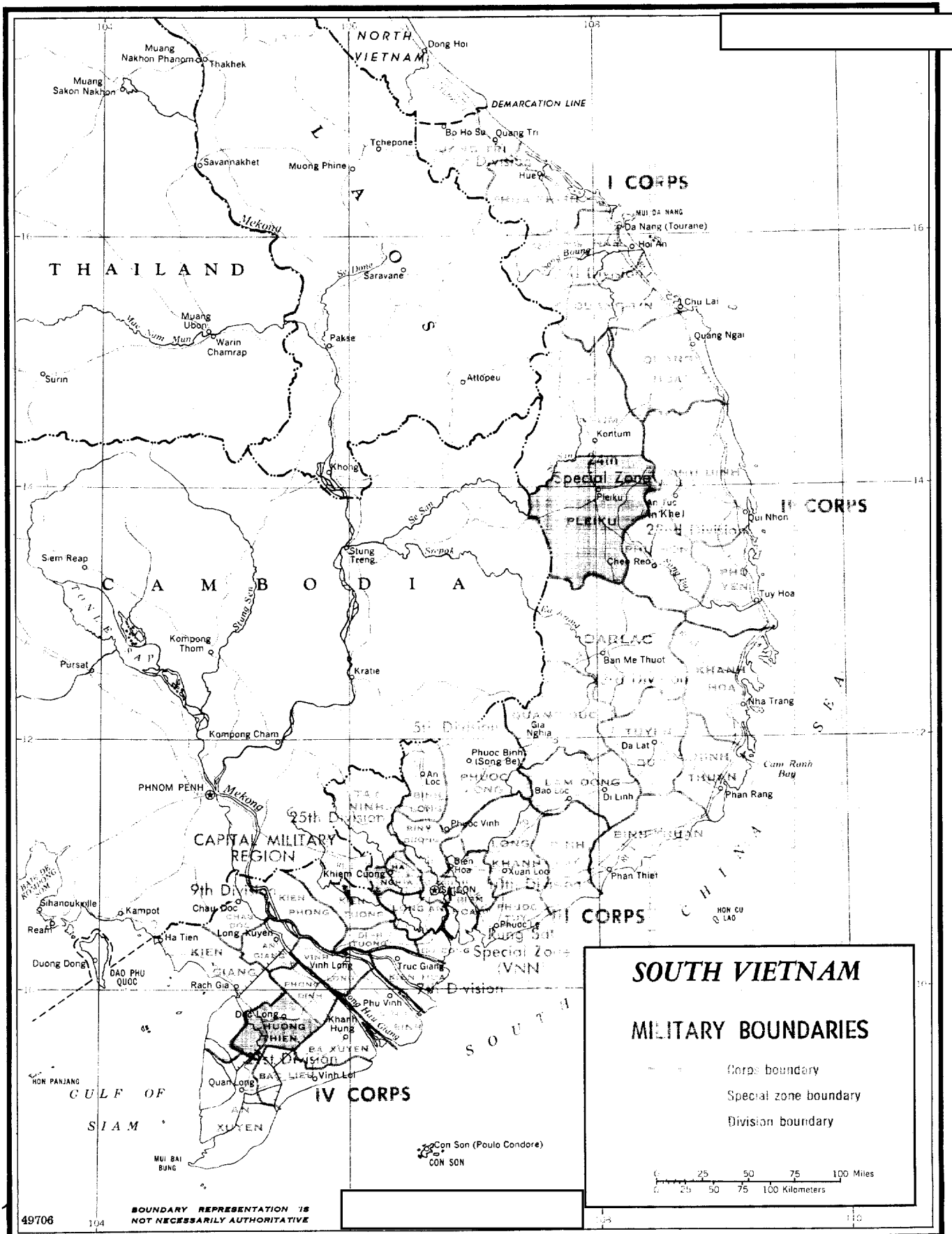
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*Vietnam: (Information as of 4:30 AM EST)

The Military Situation in South Vietnam: After three days, heavy fighting ended yesterday in western Pleiku Province. US forces, supported by some 190 tactical air sorties, had engaged two North Vietnamese regiments with an estimated strength of 3,000 troops. Eighteen Guam-based B-52 Stratofortresses bombed the area last night after at least one US battalion was withdrawn.

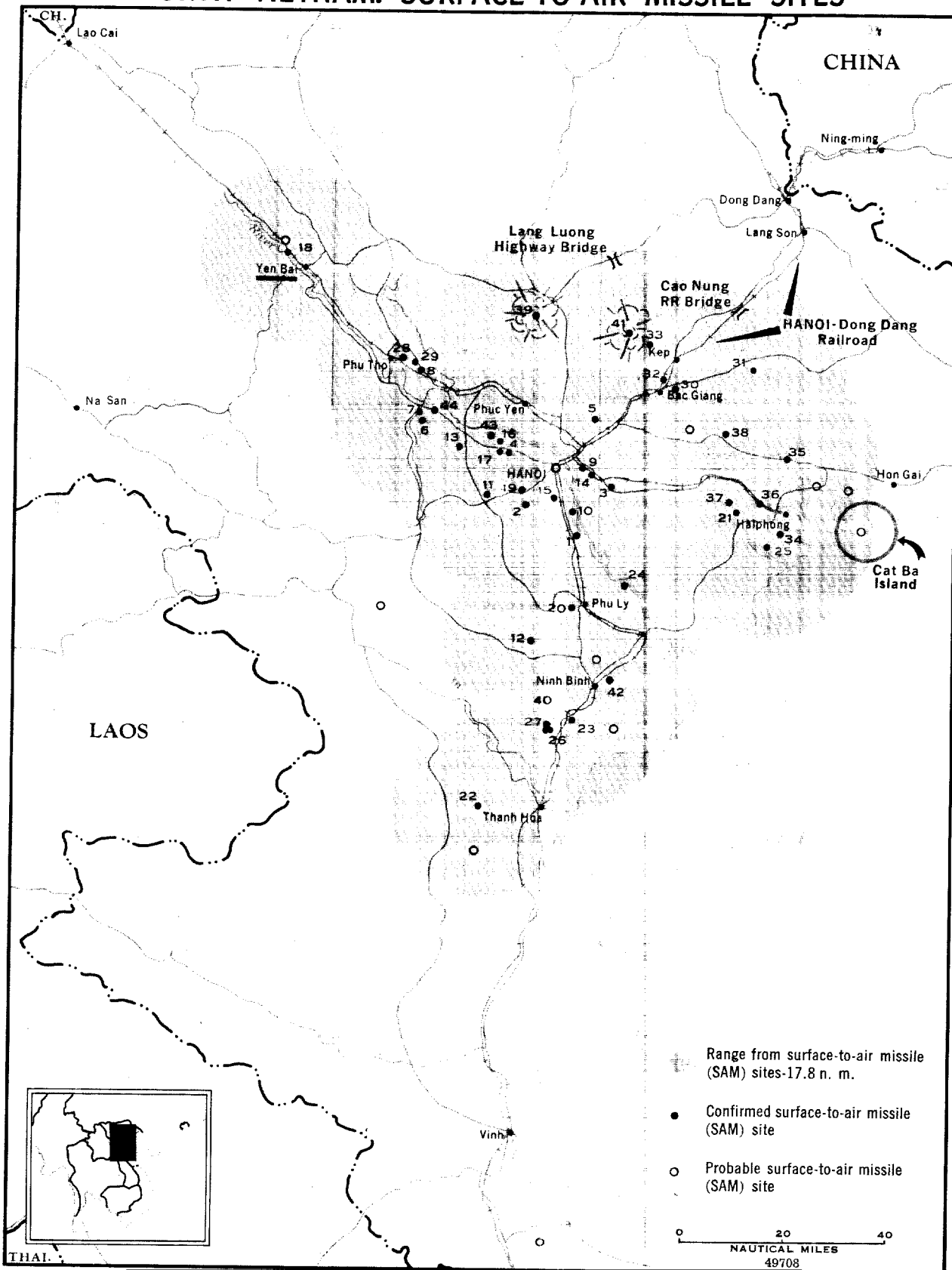
Confirmed Communist losses have been reported as 870 killed and 16 captured. US casualties total 88 killed and 118 wounded; four US helicopters also were lost.

Elsewhere, Vietnamese government troops conducting a sweep operation in Chuong Thien Province yesterday killed 46 Viet Cong and captured two. Reports of government casualties are 9 killed, 39 wounded (1 US). The operation is still in progress. In Hau Nghia Province, however, the main South Vietnamese force conducting a one day operation yesterday was successfully avoided by the Viet Cong, which inflicted 37 casualties on a lone government company. The Communists, who sustained only one confirmed casualty, also captured 28 individual weapons, seven radios, and one grenade launcher.

US military officials in Saigon have confirmed the presence of a sixth North Vietnamese regiment in South Vietnam. The new regiment, with an estimated strength of 2,000, is located in Pleiku Province, but has not yet been firmly associated with any parent North Vietnamese division. It is not known whether or not it participated in the fighting west of Plei Me.

(continued)

NORTH VIETNAM: SURFACE-TO-AIR MISSILE SITES



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Military Developments in North Vietnam: US aircraft attacked two major bridges and two SAM sites on 16 November. Strike photography showed the Lang Luong highway bridge on Route 1B some 45 miles north of Hanoi was not hit. [The Cao Nung rail bridge on the strategic Hanoi-Dong Dang rail line is still serviceable but the railway approach was interdicted at the south end of the bridge. This target was struck on 20 September but was only slightly damaged. No results are available on the strike against SAM sites 39 and 41.]

An F-105 Thunderchief was shot down by a surface-to-air missile in the vicinity of Cat Ba Island while conducting a strike against SAM installations. The pilot was not seen to eject. This is the eighth US manned aircraft and fifth drone reconnaissance vehicle shot down by SAMs.

The MIG - RF-101 engagement reported in the Central Intelligence Bulletin of 16 November occurred in the Yen Bai area, some 65 miles northwest of Hanoi, rather than at Dien Bien Phu. This is considered to be in the general Hanoi area for DRV fighter flights. The RF-101 pilots reported the MIGs had no markings and that they fired on and chased one of the reconnaissance aircraft. Both US aircraft returned safely.

Two other MIG sightings were made on 16 November in widely separated areas of the DRV although no engagements were reported. North Vietnamese fighters have become increasingly active in the past several weeks in areas where US air strikes have been conducted. However, it is believed that the Vietnamese are still placing primary reliance on their surface-to-air missile and antiaircraft artillery defenses and will commit their fighters to combat only when they believe the odds are heavily in their favor.

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Indonesia: Sukarno, bending to army pressure, has approved a purge of government personnel.

A presidential order calling for the removal of all civilian government employees directly or indirectly involved in the 30 September movement was broadcast yesterday over Radio Djakarta. The announcement specifically mentioned members of the PKI and its mass affiliates.

The order, signed by army commander Suharto on behalf of Sukarno, was in essence identical to Defense Minister Nasution's call on 15 November for a purge of all doubtful elements within the armed forces.

The army had already undertaken a sweeping purge of government departments, but Sukarno's formal approval of the action represents a psychological victory for the military. The army leadership can now be expected to increase its pressure on Sukarno to ban the PKI. Another large anti-Communist rally in Djakarta ^{was held} has been scheduled for today.

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Rhodesia: [The deadlock continues at the UN over measures to be taken against Rhodesia.]

[An action committee of African delegates has withheld a new draft resolution it was preparing which called for a total economic boycott of Rhodesia. Faced with US and UK opposition to the harsh terms of the new resolution--which nevertheless represents a weakening of previous African demands for the use of military force--the Africans did not present it to the Security Council. The council has adjourned to allow further informal discussion.]

[Sentiment remains strong in the African group for an oil embargo. Although an oil boycott would damage the Rhodesian economy, it would be extremely difficult to enforce.]

[In Salisbury, Prime Minister Smith has asked the armed forces, police, and civil service to ignore "insinuations" that there is any legitimate authority in Rhodesia other than his government. He may fear that the continued refusal of the personally popular Governor Gibbs to resign will divide the loyalty of the military establishment. The Smith government has cut off telephone service to the governor's residence, and may feel forced to take other action if it appears that Gibbs presents a serious threat to white unity.]

[The US Consulate in Salisbury reports that the situation there is quiet. An estimated 90 percent of African workers reported for work on Monday, despite a nationalist attempt to stage a general strike. *In Bulawayo, however, African nationalists are still making determined but largely unsuccessful efforts to keep factory workers from reporting to work.]

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Italy: Socialist Vice Premier Nenni's success in dominating his party's national congress should strengthen the cohesion of Italy's four-party governing coalition.

The congress, which met from 10 to 14 November, called for prompt parliamentary approval of the government's five-year economic plan (1966-70) and the specific reforms which it entails. The party also endorsed most of the government's basic foreign policy positions, although it called for Peking's admission to the UN.

An anticipated showdown between Nenni and party secretary Francesco De Martino over the timing of a socialist-social democratic merger failed to materialize, and the congress authorized concrete steps toward an early reunification of the two parties. The merger now may take place before the national elections in 1968. The Italian Communist Party's appeal for creation of a "unified workers' party of the left" was rejected.

The congress approved a new party central committee of 101 members composed of 80 representatives of the Nenni-De Martino majority faction, and only 19 from the Lombardi-New Left minority faction. There are two independents.

Nenni's success at the congress may help to reduce tensions between the socialists and the Christian democrats and perhaps ease the task of moderate Christian democrats in persuading their party that the socialists are willing to act as responsible partners in government. It should also give Nenni a freer hand to seek workable compromises with Premier Moro on thorny reform issues.

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USSR - Communist China: The initial Soviet commentary on the 11 November People's Daily - Red Flag anti-Soviet polemic, in the form of a dispatch from a Pravda correspondent in Peking, dismisses China's "groundless and provocative fabrications." The dispatch stresses Peking's open rejection of repeated appeals by Moscow and other foreign parties for united action against the US in Vietnam, and the consequent danger to the "common cause." From summaries so far available it appears that the Pravda article reflects Moscow's satisfaction with the relative success of its current tactics in the Sino-Soviet conflict. The Soviets will undoubtedly exploit the latest Chinese broadside to place the onus on Peking for interparty difficulties, but will probably continue to avoid being provoked into a full-scale polemical exchange.

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Dominican Republic: President Garcia Godoy continues to make gradual progress toward stabilizing the country, and now is beginning work on basic economic and social development plans. Finance Minister Mendez Nunez is moving to the President's office to coordinate all economic programs, including an attempt to facilitate private investment by revision of the banking law. Garcia Godoy has apparently had successful talks with business leaders and won offers of credit for the government. Rumors of a right-wing coup attempt this week continue, but US officials think the President's recent moves to regain the confidence of moderates have reduced support for rightist-extremist action.

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